



State of Arizona

Janice K. Brewer
Governor

Office of the Governor
1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Main Phone: 602-542-4331
Facsimile: 602-542-7601

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2010

CONTACT: Paul Senseman
(602) 542-1342
psenseman@az.gov

Governor Brewer Asks Arizona Congressional Democrats – Do You Intend to Pay for the Costs of Your New Mandate?

PHOENIX – The U.S. Congress and President Barack Obama have approved massive new federal healthcare mandates with severe consequences to Arizona's state budget, consequences that Governor Brewer and other state leaders have been warning about since the summer of 2009.

State government costs for the new federal healthcare bill have been initially estimated to be nearly \$400 million in FY 2011, nearly \$1 billion in 2012, and over \$1 billion in 2013. Given that Arizona's Congressional delegation has been warned repeatedly that the State of Arizona obviously does not have extra funding to pay for federal programs, Governor Brewer is asking Congressional Democrats who supported the measure a critically important question – do you intend to provide funding to pay for your mandate, without just printing more money, or do you believe Arizona's taxpayers should be left on their own to pay for the huge costs that Washington just created?

"I have repeatedly warned Arizona's Congressional members, and especially the fence-sitting Democrats who could have defeated this expensive and intrusive measure, to please consider the huge state budget deficit they would deepen if they were to pass new federal healthcare entitlements," said Governor Jan Brewer. "In fact, some Arizona legislative Democrats have acknowledged the costs to Arizona, and they have proposed a state tax increase to pay for them. Congress is currently processing additional federal spending bills on healthcare, including the possibility of some federal dollars to cover a portion of the costs for their new bill for fiscal year 2011. Do they intend to provide funding in these bills to fully cover the new costs of their new entitlements? Arizona's taxpayers and other state government services are in peril until we know with certainty whether Congress intends to fully pay for the immediate and future costs of their new entitlement expansion."

Governor Brewer and Arizona's GOP leaders last week completed a state package to help balance the state budget. The federal government is trillions of dollars in debt – debt that burdens and limits the present and the future of every single American and every single member of our Arizona family.

"I hope that Arizona's Congressional Democrats will finally realize that they cannot and should not saddle our state with one more budget problem," said Governor Brewer. "If they are not prepared to pay for their bill without printing more money, or scale it back to affordable levels, then they should join other leaders in Congress to immediately repeal it."

###